Department of State

EXCISE

TELEGRAM

E.

B-

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AN: D770358-0610

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ACTION SCS-03

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 PPT-01 CA-01 DHA-05 INSE-00
L-03 H-01 /026 W
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R 301350Z SEP 77
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0491
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY JL DATE 8/10/81
PORTIONS DENIED AS INDICATED

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 7441

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: CASC, CVIS, PAS, IS
SUBJECT: ISRAELITE OR "BLACK HEBREWS" SEEK SHOWDOWN WITH GOI

REF: A. TEL AVIV 7196
B. TEL AVIV 5140
C. TEL AVIV A-9

1. THE ISRAELITE OR BLACK HEBREW SECT IS CURRENTLY LIVING IN THREE COMMUNITIES IN ISRAEL (THE LARGEST IS IN DIMONA WHERE ABOUT 550 LIVE) CONSISTING OF ABOUT 1100 MEMBERS. THE GROUP APPEARS TO BE SUFFERING FROM AN INCREASING NUMBER OF HEALTH, ECONOMIC, HOUSING AND MORALE PROBLEMS WHICH HAVE RESULTED IN SEVERAL RECENT DEFECTIONS. THE SECT LEADERS HAVE INDICATED TO EMBASSY OFFICERS THEIR MOUNTING FRUSTRATION OVER THE REFUSAL OF THE GOI TO REGULARIZE THE GROUP'S STATUS AND ACCORD ITS MEMBERS HOUSING AND JOBS ON THE SAME BASIS AS JEWISH IMMIGRANTS. THE ARREST AND SUBSEQUENT DEPORTATION OF A GROUP OF 26 AMERICANS PURPORTING TO BE PRESBYTERIAN PILGRIMS TO THE HOLY LAND DURING THE LAST WEEK OF SEPTEMBER APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN PART OF AN EFFORT NOT ONLY TO COMPENSATE FOR THE DEFECTIONS BUT ALSO TO DRAMATIZE THE GROUP'S UNRESOLVED PLIGHT
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THROUGH INCIDENTS WHICH WOULD GET INTERNATIONAL

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ATTENTION.

2. THE GOVERNMENT OF ISRAEL WISHES NEITHER TO EXPEL THE GROUP NOR TO LEGITIMIZE ITS RIGHT TO SETTLE IN ISRAEL. IT CAREFULLY SCRUTINIZES BLACK TOURISTS WHO ARE SUSPECTED OF SEEKING TO JOIN THE SECT. SOME HAVE BEEN REFUSED ENTRY, OTHERS HAVE BEEN DEPORTED AND SOME HAVE SUCCEEDED IN EVADING ISRAELI VIGILANCE AND IN JOINING THE GROUP. ONCE NEW ARRIVALS ARE INTEGRATED INTO THE ISRAELITE HEBREW COMMUNITY THEY DESTROY THEIR IDENTIFICATION AND THEN BECOME HARD TO IDENTIFY.

3. AS A RESULT OF THE INTERCEPTION AND DEPORTATION OF THIS LATEST GROUP OF SECT MEMBERS, THE GROUP'S LEADER, GADDIEL MADASOL HAS BEEN JAILED AND FACES DEPORTATION ON CHARGES OF HAVING NO IDENTIFICATION AND BEING AN ILLEGAL ALIEN. [redacted] (B-1, EEB)

[redacted] LOCAL ISRAELI COMMUNITY LEADERS HAVE DENIED THAT THERE IS RACIAL DISCRIMINATION AND CLAIM THAT EFFORTS HAVE BEEN MADE TO HAVE SECT MEMBERS JOIN IN LOCAL SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES, BUT THAT THE GROUP'S SEPARATION FROM THE REST OF THE COMMUNITY IS SELF-IMPOSED. THERE IS AS YET NO INDICATION HOW THE GOI WILL HANDLE THE SITUATION. A MORE DETAILED REPORT FOLLOWS BY AIR-GRAM.
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